

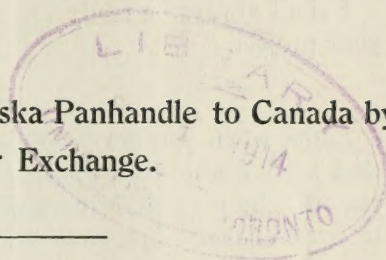
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## Proposed Cession of Alaska Panhandle to Canada by Sale or Exchange.



House Joint Resolution 373, Introduced by Hon. Frank O. Smith,  
of Maryland, October 16, 1914.

## OPINIONS

EDWARD A. ROSS,  
Professor of Political Economy, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.

NOVEMBER 9, 1914.

I want to express my heartiest accord with your statesman-like suggestion of ceding the Alaska Panhandle to Canada. In the present state of the American mind the project ought to be pushed. In time of war prepare for peace. Every intelligent man ought to resolve that there shall never be thought of trouble between Canada and the United States. I would rather we made a present to Canada of the Panhandle than did nothing about it. Why should you not elicit as many approvals from distinguished men as possible, print your proposal succinctly in a pamphlet with all the expressions of approval, and use this pamphlet as a lever for gaining still further support? Your project ought to be separated from the matter in your speech relating to the present war, because the latter might produce disagreement in some who would stand with you on your proposal. In two or

three pages the cession and the arguments for it could be stated in a way to captivate nearly all war-hating Americans.

I shall always be ready to use my influence on behalf of your project.

NOVEMBER 17, 1914.

Later, when you are preparing a circular or something of that sort, I would be glad to state in a little more space reasons why we Americans ought to jump at this opportunity to ACT on behalf of peace instead of merely TALKING about it.

In accordance with the above suggestion, a circular dated November 26 was sent out, inviting the opinions of prominent men. Following are a few of the replies received:

IRVING FISHER

*Professor of Political Economy, Yale University, New Haven,  
Conn.*

## A Precedent

In reply to your circular letter of November 26 requesting my opinion on your proposal to authorize the President to cede the Alaska Panhandle to Canada, I would say that I have seldom seen a practical suggestion in the cause of peace which appealed to me so much. Your argument seems to me unanswerable. Our country would have everything to gain and nothing to lose, and in fact would give to the rest of the world a most valuable contribution to civilization—a *Precedent*. Millions of people in Europe and American feel that we have outgrown the childish, barbaric grab-and-keep idea, and yet so strong is the force of tradition that we still cling to this idea in almost all international relations. The only way to break the thread of this tradition, which we inherit from pre-civilization days, is by establishing a new *Precedent*. Moreover, from a purely patriotic and pro-American point of view, quite irrespective of any promotion of general "internationalism," there is nothing which would more speedily and greatly increase the respect of other na-

tions for the United States than such an act. We should gain immensely in prestige, and, as you have suggested, this would help us play an effective part when, if ever, the time for our mediation in the present European war arrives.

CYRUS NORTHROP

*President Emeritus, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis,  
Minn., President Minnesota Peace Society.*

I have read with great interest your speech delivered in the House of Representatives, October 24, 1914, in support of a resolution requesting the President to make an offer to the British and Canadian governments in regard to the transfer of southeastern Alaska to Canada by sale or exchange, or both. Your argument seems to me satisfactory and conclusive. In the interest of peace, for the promotion of good feeling between Canada and the United States, as a practical application of the Golden Rule, such an offer by our President could not fail to command the attention, if not the admiration, of the world, and it would be eminently wise to make such an offer, whether its influence upon the continuance of the present lamentable war should or should not be perceptible. Let us by all means "follow the things which make for peace."

JOHN H. GRAY

*Head of Department of Economics, University of Minnesota,  
Minneapolis, Minn.*

I have no doubt that if the subject were approached with sufficient caution and thorough investigation, the straightening out of many international boundaries might be done with advantage. Certainly nothing but historic incidents could have given to the United States that tremendous stretch of sea front, shutting out the Dominion of Canada so largely from the Pacific Ocean. I refer to the Alaska Panhandle. Whether or not I should be in favor of ceding it to Canada would depend entirely on the conditions of the cession.

E. DANA DURAND

*Professor of Political Economy, University of Minnesota,  
Minneapolis, Minn. (Former Director U. S. Census).*

I have not been able to give any thorough study to the plan of ceding to Canada the Alaska Panhandle, but my first impressions are somewhat favorable. The matter at least deserves thorough consideration by Congress and the American people. It would doubtless be desirable, if such a cession were made, to accompany it with a treaty granting certain rights to the United States with respect to the ports of the territory in question.

A. G. FRADENBURGH

*Professor of History and Politics, Adelphi College, Brooklyn,  
N. Y.*

Your plan of ceding the Alaska Panhandle to Canada either in exchange or for a reasonable cash payment is an excellent one. It is geographically a part of Canada and its political connection with the United States cannot fail to be a cause for trouble in the future. It would be an example that would immensely increase our reputation for fair dealing.

LEONARD H. PILLSBURY

*President Derry Peace Society, Derry, N. H., Honorary Vice-  
President American Peace Society.*

I have read with much interest your communication relating to the abolition of war and the establishment of universal peace. If, as seems to be the fact, the Canadians have with good cause a strong wish to acquire the "Panhandle," and its possession would be of greater value to them than to us, by all means let them have it. I should, of course, strongly favor the introduction of the Golden Rule into the diplomacy of the world, where it has seldom had a place. I am glad that men's minds are turning in the direction of that rule, which, if universally adopted, would remove the occasion of all, or nearly all, wars.

REV. GEORGE HASLAM

*Secretary Derry Peace Society, Derry, N. H.*

Thank you very much for the copy of your able and timely speech, which I have read carefully.

As an Englishman, and a Canadian representative on the Imperial Federation Committee (but who has taken out papers of naturalization in the United States), I agree with you that a real concession made by the United States to Canada, such as you advocate, would be a splendid thing, to which, if they desired to do so, the representatives of the United States might point, when the United States was mediating between the, at the present time, madly warring European nations.

I agree with you upon unnumbered things, for example, that it is worse than foolish for the leading white nations to be engaged in this unnatural war, the Eastern menace being what it is; that, looking to the future, a stable peace between the contending nations is absolutely necessary; that, helped by the backing of the United States, England will take a firm stand against any proposal that would mean the permanent weakening of so progressive a people as the Germans.

JOHN B. CLARK

*Professor of Political Economy, Columbia University, New York.*

The Alaska suggestion is interesting. My offhand impression is that a mutually advantageous exchange is within the bounds of easy possibility.

HERBERT J. DAVENPORT

*Dean of School of Commerce, University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.*

I favor this resolution.

REV. CHARLES F. DOLE

*Honorary Vice-President American Peace Society, Jamaica  
Plain, Mass.*

I am glad to see your admirable proposal to serve Canada as we would wish to be served if the conditions of the Alaska Panhandle were reversed. I hope it will go through.

HORACE J. RICE

*Executive Secretary, Springfield Peace and Arbitration  
Society (Branch of Massachusetts Peace Society), Spring-  
field, Mass.*

I wish to commend most heartily the resolution providing that the President be requested to make an offer to the British and Canadian Governments to negotiate in regard to the transfer of southeastern Alaska to Canada by sale or exchange or both. It seems to me a thoroughly statesman-like proposal, reflecting the new attitude toward world politics which is one of the most hopeful signs of the times. It recognizes that, as a matter of righteousness and common courtesy, we should not keep territory which is of small value to us when some other country is in a position to get infinitely more prosperity from it and give infinitely more prosperity to it than we could do, and at the same time it shows an appreciation of the fact, too often ignored, that from a merely selfish standpoint the cementing yet more firmly of our friendly relations with a neighboring State may be worth far more to us in dollars and cents than the possession of a strip of land, however desirable, which is so situated as to prove a constant source of friction and possible quarrel.

I should suppose that Canada would jump at the chance to exchange for it, even at a considerable price; but from the standpoint of the United States the most important thing we would get by the trade would not be the consideration given, but the firm assurance of continued peace and goodwill along our northern border.

RICHARD R. BOWKER

*Editor of Publishers' Weekly Book Review and of Library  
Journal, 241 West 37th St., New York.*

I am much interested in your endeavors toward international peace and in your plan for making the international good will of our country by proffering the Panhandle of Alaska to our sister nation, Canada, and I have read with additional interest Prof. Ross' excellent letter. I believe that the boundaries of nations should follow natural lines and that each nation should be willing to cede portions of its own territory, with the consent of its inhabitants, to a nation with which such territory would be under more natural relations. I hope the question may be discussed and decided in view of the welfare of Alaska and the unity of Canada, and in any event I honor very cordially the noble spirit of your proposal.

J. J. HALL, D.D.

*Director South Atlantic States Department, American Peace  
Society, 148 Forrest Avenue, Atlanta, Ga.*

I am thoroughly in sympathy with this movement, though I fear the feeling in the United States is so keenly sensitive at this time that whatever may seem friendly to England or Canada would meet with severe, though I think mistaken, opposition. I can hardly conceive a more generous act than that which you suggest to crown the 100 years of peace now so soon to be celebrated.

W. H. SHORT

*Executive Secretary, New York Peace Society, 507 Fifth  
Avenue, New York.*

I am in thorough accord with Prof. Edward A. Ross of the University of Wisconsin in his opinion that your proposition for the cession to Canada, or exchange, of the Alaska Panhandle ought to be separated from all allusion

to the supremacy of the white race and the present war. Do that and I am heartily with you. I have favored the plan of treating Canada handsomely in this matter ever since I first heard it proposed. Canada is a good neighbor and a good neighbor deserves generous treatment, whether it be an individual or a nation. To accord it is also good politics. State the proposition on its own merits and I believe that the great majority of the American people would vote for it with both hands.

SCOTT NEARING

*Instructor in Economics, Wharton School of Finance and Commerce, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.*

Although I have no first-hand knowledge of the questions which you raise, I am heartily in sympathy with any movement which will supplement the friendly relations between the United States and Canada. The question as to the amount of compensation, or the form of compensation, which we shall receive for the Alaska Panhandle is not nearly so important as the question of our general Canadian relations. I heartily commend any effort to further the friendliness of these relations.

CHARLES H. COOLEY

*Professor of Sociology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.*

I am heartily in sympathy with your view that the attitude of the United States toward other nations can and ought to be one of true friendliness and courtesy. The idea that this is impracticable is a mere superstition without the slightest basis in political science or social psychology. If it is not done, it is because we neglect, to our great damage, to organize friendliness and courtesy in these relations.

Let us by all means take up the Panhandle question in a spirit of magnanimity and sympathy, and if the situation proves to be as you say, let us offer it to Canada on neighborly terms.

If I were you, I would not only dissociate your project from the present war, but also suppress your views regarding the supremacy of the white race and of a possible combination against other races. That seems to me, as regards the Orientals, just the kind of irritating, resentment-provoking attitude you are properly anxious to avoid in the case of Canada. Whether sound or not, such views have no place in this project.

CHARLES WHITING BAKER

*Editor-in-Chief, Engineering News, 10th Ave. & 36th St.,  
New York.*

I wish to express my most hearty approval of your proposition to offer the Alaska Panhandle to Canada and Great Britain as a means at the present time of encouraging the idea of international friendship and good will. The matter would have to be carefully handled, however, to make it clear that in this offer we were in no way favoring one side in the European combat as opposed to the other. Your proposition will doubtless encounter intense opposition because in the territory under consideration there are being developed what will doubtless be in a few years the most valuable gold mines in America, if not in the world. I do not believe, however, that this should for a moment stand in the way of effecting a transfer of territory, if the result could in any way be such as you anticipate.

ARTHUR T. LYMAN

*50 State St., Boston, Mass.*

I approve most heartily of your suggestions in regard to the Alaska Panhandle and think the plan an admirable one, and one likely to avoid some very serious complications in

the future. The sale or even gift of the Panhandle to Canada would relieve us of a rather troublesome burden. Of course Canada would be glad to pay a very considerable sum.

EDWARD D. PAGE  
*31 Nassau St., New York.*

I am thoroughly in accord with your views that we should be prepared, in the interests of world peace, to concede something to show our good will. Canada has a moral right, if not a legal one, to the sea coast. It is true that this will involve the cities of Sitka and Juneau; but it is much better to give them voluntarily now than to have them forced from us some other time by war. We may well receive something in trade, but this piece of territory does not logically belong to us. *If we held the back country and some other nation held this strip, we would be ready to fight for it, just as we were ready to fight for the mouth of the Mississippi.*

If other nations would follow this lead, we would have very little difficulty in adjusting the present disagreements between our friends abroad.



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